



NEWS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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City making strides in hiring more minority and women-owned businesses

Disparity Study findings and recommendations presented to City Council

Mayor Phil Hardberger and City Council members Wednesday were briefed on the results of a study designed to determine disparity rates in the awarding of City contracts to minority and women-owned businesses.

The study, which was performed by MGT of America Inc, concluded that the City is a leader for the inclusion of small and minority-owned businesses. It also found that the City effectively utilized Hispanic American and women-owned business enterprise construction subcontractors.

A 1987 study by the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce found that City contracts awarded to minority and women-owned businesses was less than 4 percent. The City instituted a program to remedy the disparity. Consequently, from 1989 to 1990, minority and women-owned subcontractors were awarded \$12.2 million in contracts, or 14.7 percent of the total contract pool. This most recent study, covering the period from September 2004 to December 2007, found that the same group received \$43.9 million in contracts, or 24.5 percent of the total.

“Statistical evidence is important when determining whether our efforts at reducing these gaps are working. This study indicates that the City has made great strides in this

area and I'm proud of that," said Mayor Phil Hardberger. "We can always do better, and it will be up to the entire community to make sure diversity is a hallmark of our economic landscape. We look forward to partnering with the private sector to expand contracting opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses."

The Study's findings, while positive, did point to areas that needed improvement when awarding City contracts.

"The City is a leader in the utilization of small, minority, and women-owned businesses and we are committed to improving our current procurement policy and small business program," said City Manager Sheryl Sculley. "There is a large available pool of these business enterprises in our community and the City can do more to encourage them to compete for business."

District 6 City Councilwoman Delicia Herrera, who chairs the Oversight Committee with District 2 City Councilwoman Sheila McNeil, said while there is room for improvement, the study validates City efforts to be more diverse.

"As a small business owner, I am heartened that the City has made progress in contracting with a more diverse pool of local small businesses that have traditionally faced challenges in getting in the game," Councilwoman Herrera said. "We are reinvesting in the backbone of our economy – our small business community – through a model of inclusion rather than exclusion as we utilize their skills, expertise, talent and workforce."

A public hearing will be held from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on Friday, April 17 at the Central Library, 600 Soledad, to discuss the findings and recommendations of the San Antonio Regional Business Disparity Causation Analysis Study.

The public comment period for the study ends **Tuesday, April 21**. The City will evaluate the comments received from the City Council, as well as, comments they receive from the public and develop a list of recommendations for implementation as they re-

evaluate their current policy. In addition to the public hearing, individuals can also review the report at the San Antonio Central Library, the City's Economic Development Department, any of the five Community Link Centers and online at www.sanantonio.gov/edd/small_business/disparity_study.asp.

MGT is a national consulting firm with 3,600 clients in 50 states. In the last 20 years, the company has conducted disparity and disparity-related studies for more than 120 jurisdictions around the country. For more information, contact Melissa Aguillon at 207-8098 or Tiffany Edmonds at 207-2098.